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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 000116

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/07/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EI](#)
SUBJECT: IRISH VIEWS ON MARCH 10-11 FOREIGN MINISTERS
MEETING (GAERC)

REF: A. STATE 22352

[1](#)B. DUBLIN 105

Classified By: Pol/Econ Section Chief Ted Pierce;
Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) POLOFF delivered demarche (Ref A) on March 6, 2008 to Pat Kelly, European Correspondent, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). Ireland has recognized Kosovo's independence. The Irish Foreign Minister has publicly called for an end to violence in the Middle East. Ireland has not been requested by the EU to participate in the police trainers project in Afghanistan. Ireland thinks Western nations must engage in dialogue with Syria. The Irish think additional engagement with Pakistan and harsher European sanctions against Iran will only happen over time. Ireland sees little prospect for EU involvement in Zimbabwean elections and does not believe the Russians are serious in threatening to recognize Abkhazia. End summary.

Western Balkans

[1](#)2. (SBU) Kelly noted that Ireland had recognized Kosovo's independence on February 28 (Ref B). He reiterated that Ireland intended to remain involved in KFOR (for which Ireland is the framework nation). While Ireland would seek peace in the Balkans and encourage Kosovo and Serbia to join the EU, Kelly said, he also noted that Ireland held little sway in either the Western Balkans or Russia that could be used to mediate between Serbia and Kosovo.

Israeli-Palestinian Peace

[1](#)3. (U) Ireland has been vocal in regards to the MEPP, Kelly said, pointing to Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern's press release of 02/29/2008, in which Ahern warned that further escalation of violence in Gaza could only bring death and tragedy to Israelis and Palestinians and would seriously undermine the prospect of achieving a two-state solution. Ahern's statement went on to say "I utterly condemn both the firing of rockets on Israeli towns and the killing of an Israeli student in Sderot on Wednesday, and the large numbers of civilian killings, including a baby and several children, in Israeli air attacks on Gaza. It is in the interests of the Israeli and Palestinian people that all parties now meet their responsibilities and end the violence. At this point there are no easy options, and there are certainly no military solutions. The only way forward is to restore momentum to the political process which is being led by Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas. I appeal to all parties to use their influence to achieve an urgent ceasefire,

bringing an end to all rocket attacks by Palestinian armed groups and all Israeli military action in the Occupied Territories."

Syria/Lebanon

14. (SBU) Kelly said that Ireland sees the Syria/Lebanon situation as deadlocked. In regards to diplomatic exchanges between Syria and Western Europe, Kelly simply noted that while Ireland recognized that Syria was not doing enough to promote peace and human rights in Lebanon, the EU still needed to talk to Syria because eventually Syria would need to be part of any solution.

Pakistan

15. (C) Kelly said that the EU would most likely wait to see what kind of coalition government emerged before deciding how to continue its engagement of Pakistan.

Afghanistan

16. (C) Kelly noted that Ireland has not been requested by the EU to participate in the police trainers project in Afghanistan. (Note: In previous discussions with Rory Montgomery, Political Director, DFA, Montgomery indicated that while Ireland had no appetite for committing additional troops to Afghanistan through the NATO Partnership for Peace program, Ireland would be willing to consider additional humanitarian and development assistance, particularly through nongovernmental organizations. End note.)

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Zimbabwe

17. (SBU) Ireland is greatly concerned about the political, economic, and human rights situation in Zimbabwe, Kelly said. He indicated that Ireland would fully support international election monitors, but speculated that it was probably too late for any organization, other than SADC, to actually put monitors on the ground.

Georgia

18. (C) Kelly said that Ireland is concerned about irregularities in the January presidential election and fully agreed that the May parliamentary elections need to see improvements. He discounted the threat that Russia might recognize Abkhazia, saying that signals the Irish had been receiving from the Russians indicated they were not serious about the threat. Though the Russians are sore about Kosovo, Kelly said, Ireland did not believe that Russia wants to inflame secessionist movements by recognizing Abkhazia.

Iran

19. (C) Noting that Iranian government thinking remains unchanged, Kelly said that Ireland supported the third Iran sanctions UNSCR. He indicated that EU implementation of the new sanctions would proceed quickly and smoothly, but doubted that the EU would be forthcoming quickly with additional autonomous sanctions. It was his opinion that the more Iran defied the UN, the harder European attitudes would become. However, he said this would take time.

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